

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 DAMASC 01250 01 OF 02 041028Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SSM-03
IO-13 /075 W
-----115776 041030Z /10/43

R 031344Z MAR 78 ZDK
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7086
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
USLO RIYADH
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
SECDEF
DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 DAMASCUS 1250

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PLO
SUBJECT: NOTES ON THE PLO

REF: DAMASCUS 951

1. POLOFF HAD OPPORTUNITY THIS WEEK TO TALK WITH SEVERAL
SOURCES WHO ARE IN REGULAR CONTACT WITH SENIOR PLO OFFICIALS.
THE FOLLOWING IS A COMPILATION OF BRIEF NOTES ON VARIOUS
TOPICS OF INTEREST COVERED.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 DAMASC 01250 01 OF 02 041028Z

2. PALESTINE NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING--PNC CHAIRMAN FAHUM
REPORTED FEB 28 IN SYRIAN PRESS PREDICTING PNC WOULD
CONVENE IN LATE MARCH IN EITHER DAMASCUS, TRIPOLI OR ALGIERS.
FAHUM PREVIOUSLY TOLD VISITOR THAT HE EXPECTED THE
PNC TO CONVENE DESPITE SOME OPPOSITION SINCE IT WAS SUPPOSED TO
MEET ANNUALLY. FAHUM ACKNOWLEDGED THAT ARAFAT HAD BEEN LESS THAN
ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT IDEA AT THE LAST CENTRAL COUNCIL

MEETING IN DAMASCUS (SEE REFTTEL), BUT CLAIMED ARAFAT HAD PRINCIPALLY OBJECTED TO PROPOSALS THAT IT BE HELD IN EITHER DAMASCUS OR TRIPOLI. ARAFAT HAD FAVORED TUNIS BUT GIVEN UNREST IN THAT COUNTRY ALGIERS WAS NOW MOST LIKELY VENUE. EXCOMM MEMBER NASHASHIBI ECHOED FAHUM'S REMARKS IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION. HOWEVER, REGULAR PALESTINIAN SOURCE WHO PARTICIPATED IN CONVERSATION AT DAMASCUS PLO OFFICES, IN WHICH EXCOMM MEMBERS ABU MAYZAR AND ABU SITTAH AMONG OTHER PLO LUMINARIES WERE PRESENT, QUERIED WHETHER THERE WOULD BE A POSTPONEMENT OF THE PNC TO WHICH ONE OF THE GROUP SARCASTICALLY REPLIED, WILL THERE EVEN BE A PNC MEETING? THIS REMARK GREETED BY GUFFAWS INDICATING THE CYNICISM OF MANY SENIOR PLO OFFICIALS TOWARD THE PROSPECTS OF THE PNC CONVENING GIVEN ARAFAT'S OPPOSITION. HABASH SAID TO BE TRYING TO CLOSE THE GAP BETWEEN HIM AND ARAFAT IN HOPES THAT TRIPOLI COMMUNIQUE WILL SERVE AS BASIS FOR NEW PLO POLITICAL PLATFORM PERMITTING RETURN OF THE PFLP TO THE EXCOMM.

3. ARAFAT--FAHUM AND NASHASHIBI CONTINUE TO CHARGE THAT ARAFAT WAS AWARE OF SADAT'S JERUSALEM TRIP. FAHUM CLAIMS ARAFAT ORDERED FATAH UNIT TO FIRE INTO ISRAEL JUST PRIOR TO SADAT'S NOW FAMOUS "ENDS OF THE EARTH" SPEECH BEFORE EGYPTIAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY TO DISTRACT ARAB ATTENTION FROM FULL SIGNIFICANCE OF WHAT WAS BEING DONE. NEVER-THELESS, SOURCE STRUCK BY UNACCUSTOMED WARMTH IN FAHUM'S CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 DAMASC 01250 01 OF 02 041028Z

REMARKS ABOUT ARAFAT. SOURCE REPORTED FAHUM HAS A GROWING SENSE OF HIS OWN SELF-IMPORTANCE AND NOW SPEAKS OF HIMSELF AS THOUGH HE SECOND ONLY TO ARAFAT IN PLO POLITICAL CONSTELLATION. BOTH NASHASHIBI AND FAHUM DISMISSED REPORTS THAT ARAFAT IN TROUBLE AND CLAIMED IF ANYTHING, HIS STOCK WAS ON THE UPSWING. THIS FURTHER BORNE OUT BY SYRIAN BUSINESSMAN WITH CLOSE TIES TO THE HASAN BROTHERS, HANI AND KHALED. HE REPORTED BOTH BELIEVE THAT ONLY ARAFAT CAPABLE OF KEEPING THE PLO TOGETHER DESPITE HIS OCCASIONAL BLUNDERS. ASSAD, HOWEVER, REMAINS DISTRUSTFUL OF ARAFAT BUT HAS ENCOURAGED THE HASAN BROTHERS TO CALL ON HIM WHEN IN DAMASCUS (KHALED AND ASSAD HAD 3 HOUR MEETING FEB. 14). FAHUM AFFIRMED REPORTS THAT ARAFAT WILL TRAVEL TO USSR IN MARCH.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 DAMASC 01250 02 OF 02 031531Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SSM-03
IO-13 /075 W

-----104504 031653Z /43

R 031344Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7087
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
USLO RIYADH
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
SECDEF
DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 DAMASCUS 1250

4. SADAT--FAHUM AND NASHASHIBI WERE PONDERING WAYS TO
BRING SADAT BACK INTO ARAB FOLD AFTER INEVITABLE
FAILURE OF HIS TALKS (CONVERSATION OCCURRED SEVERAL DAYS
AFTER LARNACA TRAGEDY) AND WERE UNCHARACTERISTICALLY
CRITICAL OF SYRIA FOR ITS INFLEXIBLE STAND TOWARD
RECONCILIATION. FAHUM FELT ISRAELI AND ARAB EXTREMISTS
COMPLEMENTED EACH OTHER. FOR THEIR PART, KHALED AND HANI AL-HASAN
LAMENTED SADAT'S REFUSAL OF SECRET CONTACTS WITH THE PLO AND HIS
INSISTENCE ON OPEN POLITICAL BACKING WHICH HE KNEW THEY COULD NOT GIV
E.

THEY FELT THAT ONLY PRINCE FAHD COULD REOPEN PLO CHANNELS
TO SADAT. HOWEVER, THOSE PRESENT AT DAMASCUS PLO HEAD-
QUARTERS CONVERSATION WERE ENRAGED AT SADAT. THEY SCORNE
D HIS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 DAMASC 01250 02 OF 02 031531Z

DECISION TO SEND COMMANDOS TO LARNACA AND BELIEVED HIS
ANTI-PALESTINIAN DIATRIBES WERE INTENDED TO DIVERT PUBLIC
ANGER AWAY FROM THE "INEPTITUDE" HIS GOVERNMENT
HAD DISPLAYED. ABU MAYZAR CLAIMED COMMANDOS WOULD HAVE
KILLED THE HOSTAGES WITH THEIR WILD SHOOTING IF THE
CYPRIOTS HAD NOT INTERVENED. ABU MAYZAR ALSO PUTTING
OUT STORY THAT MANY MORE THAN 15 EGYPTIANS HAD DIED ON THE

TARMAC. CONSENSUS WITHIN GROUP WAS THAT SADAT WAS FINISHED. EVEN AFRICANS WOULD NOT ACCEPT HIS "PRETENSIONS" TO POLICE THAT CONTINENT. DESPITE THIS UNFORGIVING ATTITUDE, ABU MAYZAR DID NOT BELIEVE THAT SADAT WOULD DARE SELL OUT THE PALESTINIANS SINCE "HE WOULD NOT EVEN BE SAFE IN EGYPT IF HE DID."

4. LEBANON--AHMAD JIBRIL TOLD SYRIAN BUSINESSMAN IN TELCON FEB. 27 THAT HE REGRETTED HE COULD NOT RECEIVE HIM, BUT HE WAS BUSY CLOSING PFLP-GC OFFICES IN SIDON AND OTHER POPULATION CENTERS IN SOUTH AFTER TELEPHONE CONVERSATION ON THE SUBJECT HE HAD WITH PRES. ASSAD. HANI AL-HASAN TOLD SAME SOURCE THAT DURING FIGHTING BETWEEN LEBANESE MILITIAS AND SYRIAN ARMY, FATAH HAD CONTACTED MILITIA LEADERS TO INFORM THEM THAT FATAH DID NOT WISH TO BECOME INVOLVED IN FIGHTING. CHAMOUN REPORTEDLY REMARKED TO THEM THAT "FIGHTING YOU IS HEAVEN COMPARED WITH THESE SYRIANS." MUSA SADR, WITH CONSIDERABLE FATAH SYMPATHY, IS SAID TO BE UNHAPPY THAT SYRIA HAS COOLED ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM IN FAVOR OF KAMAL ASSAD.

5. KING HUSSEIN--FAHUM WHO LONG HAS BEEN A PRIME EXPONENT OF A PLO-JORDANIAN RECONCILIATION IS NOW SPEAKING CRITICALLY OF HUSSEIN. HE HAS CONCLUDED THAT DESPITE RECENT EXCHANGE OF MESSAGES BETWEEN HUSSEIN AND PLO, KING IS NOT SINCERE AND DEALS WITH THE PLO ACCORDING TO ITS CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 DAMASC 01250 02 OF 02 031531Z

CURRENT FORTUNES IN THE ARAB WORLD. FAHUM DOES NOT EXPECT ANY SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT FOR THE PRESENT IN JORDANIAN-PLO RELATIONS.
PELLETREAU

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PALESTINIANS, REPORTS, INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, PUBLIC ATTITUDES, LIBERATION FRONTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978DAMASC01250
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780147-0377, D780097-1266
Format: TEL
From: DAMASCUS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197803111/aaaadqdo.tel
Line Count: 206
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 45b9bab9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 DAMASCUS 951
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3132222
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NOTES ON THE PLO
TAGS: PINS, XF, PLO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/45b9bab9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014